The Neurotypification of Society:

Ego, Hype, and the Loss of Structural Reasoning

Benjamin James

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Abstract
Modern society exhibits a deep cognitive asymmetry: the dominance of neurotypical convergence over structural reasoning. History has never been a smooth accumulation of knowledge, but the rare work of minds who broke consensus to open new coherence pathways. Each time, the doors they opened were swiftly flooded. Not with discovery, but with words. This paper diagnoses the neurotypification of society as a structural drift in which symbols have displaced structure, ego and hype have replaced feedback, and the doing of knowledge has been eclipsed by the talking about it. Scientific publication exemplifies this pathology: a culture measuring truth in volume and citation rather than coherence yield, producing a self-reinforcing symbolic network detached from first principles. The result is a civilization in symbolic lock-in, mistaking language for reality and authority for discovery. Through historical analysis and contemporary symptoms, this work frames the crisis not as moral failure but as attractor dynamics of a species that has chosen words over world.

Keywords: neurotypicality, neurodivergence, coherence, structural reasoning, symbolic lock-in, authority, hype, ego, science, publication crisis

A Civilization of All Talk

Every civilization selects the medium through which it imagines itself real. For ours, that medium is language. Not merely as a vehicle of communication, but as the scaffolding upon which reality itself is suspended. We have constructed a symbolic lattice and mistaken it for the ground it was meant to map. Words do not just describe our world; they have become its proxy. This is the soil in which the divide between “talking” and “doing” takes root.

Neurotypical (NT) cognition thrives in this terrain. Its genius is convergence, the ability to synchronize signals, bind disparate minds into a shared narrative, and weave meaning until it feels self-evident. Language here is not a neutral instrument but a habitat. Reality is whatever can be said, repeated, and collectively recognized as such. In this mode, words are not mere labels for structure; they are treated as the structure itself.

Neurodivergent (ND) cognition occupies a different axis. Less anchored to the social comfort of shared symbols, it tracks the hidden scaffolding beneath the story. Where the NT mind asks, “Does this align with what we agree upon?”, the ND mind asks, “Does this align with what is?” One stabilizes consensus, the other tests the frame against the feedback of reality. These are not opposing functions but complementary roles, a tension that has shaped every epoch of thought and every inflection point in knowledge.

Yet what happens when the balance tilts? When the cognitive majority becomes so attuned to the symbolic that it ceases to distinguish between map and territory, between word and world? What emerges is a culture where language ceases to point to structure and instead replaces it. The act of saying becomes more important than the act of building; the

consensus of voices outweighs the weight of reality pressing back. Discovery recedes into description. Doing becomes invisible beneath the avalanche of talking.

This is not a moral failure but an attractor dynamic: a civilization caught in its own linguistic reflection, mistaking the echo for the source. And once words becomes the world, the very structures that sustain life and knowledge risk dissolving into the performance of their names.

The Door and the Flood

Every true advance in human thought begins not with words but with a collision against the raw edge of reality. Newton did not stumble into discovery through language; he carved a grammar from the motion of bodies that need no equations. Einstein's relativity was not a narrative, nor even an argument. It was a structural incision, a bending of the conceptual frame to fit the curvature already inscribed in the world. These moments arrive not as discursive triumphs but as direct encounters with coherence itself. They are not stories we tell; they are doors forced open in the architecture of understanding.

But the opening of a door is only ever the first act. What follows is the flood. Once a structural breakthrough is made, the neurotypical attractor field begins its slow, unrelenting work of conversion. What was once a raw structural interface is translated into the medium society trusts most: symbols. Equations that began as provisional scaffolds for reality harden into scripture. What was once a set of structural relations becomes a catechism to be memorized, standardized, and repeated until the living feedback loop is gone. The act of discovery is rewritten into narrative, a story of progress and genius that can be consumed

and retold without ever touching the structure itself. The doing becomes invisible, and the talking becomes the thing being maintained.

This is not an incidental process; it is the gravitational pull of a society whose cognition rests primarily in language. A door opens into a new coherence gradient, and immediately words rush in to frame, define, and stabilize it. The flood is not malicious. It is the majority function of a species securing consensus around what it cannot yet fully grasp. But the cost is steep. In the deluge of commentary and codification, the structure that made the breakthrough possible is obscured by its own description. Knowledge expands in volume while contracting in depth.

What begins as a singular encounter with reality mutates into a self-referential system of symbols speaking to other symbols. The living structural feedback, the *doing*, is replaced by the endless maintenance of talk. Each paper cites another, each narrative reinforces the last, and the ratio of language to structure tilts until the structure itself recedes into near-invisibility. The door that once led to open terrain becomes framed, walled, and finally sealed behind the weight of its own explanations.

This is the pattern repeated across centuries: a small number of minds force open pathways into the unknown, and the rest of civilization, in seeking to preserve them, floods them with language until only the echo remains. What we inherit as “disciplines” are often not living structures at all, but linguistic monuments built over the sites of genuine coherence. The door becomes a shrine. The flood becomes the field. And beneath the tide of words, the original structure quietly disappears.

The Publication Crisis as Symptom

Nowhere is the symbolic saturation of modern society more visible than in its scientific apparatus. What we call the “publication crisis” is not simply a question of volume or institutional dysfunction; it is the logical endpoint of a culture where language has displaced structure as the measure of truth. The exponential growth of papers is not evidence of discovery. It is evidence of a system mistaking words for reality, optimizing itself to produce more symbols while losing contact with the structures those symbols were meant to track.

Knowledge is no longer measured by what is uncovered in the fabric of the world but by the accumulation of language that signals discovery. A finding exists not when it reveals new structure but when it has been written, formatted, and indexed into the symbolic network. The metric is not coherence yield but linguistic mass. In such a system, doing becomes secondary to talking about doing, and the true anomaly is no longer the breakthrough but the act of direct, structural engagement itself.

Peer review, once imagined as a safeguard for rigor, has become the mechanism through which this symbolic lock-in maintains itself. It does not test coherence against reality but enforces alignment within the language-field of the discipline. A paper’s survival depends less on whether it touches the structure of the world and more on whether it speaks in the correct tongue, whether it mirrors the existing narrative network. It is linguistic policing disguised as epistemic validation.

The result is a feedback loop: the more language is treated as the substrate of knowledge, the more language is produced to feed the system, and the less contact the entire enterprise has with the structural reality it claims to explore. The flood of publications is not a sign of

intellectual health but of symbolic overgrowth, the proliferation of talk until the doing is rendered invisible. In this landscape, the act of discovery is not just rare; it becomes deviant. The talk becomes the world; the doing becomes the anomaly.

Structural Self-Sealing

Every system carries within it the seeds of its own defense. When the substrate of a culture becomes symbolic consensus, its immune system is built from the very language that constitutes its reality. Challenges to the structure are not evaluated on the basis of their contact with what lies beneath; they are filtered through the symbolic mesh itself. The question is not “is this coherent with the world?” but “is this coherent with our story?” In such a system, anything that does not match the prevailing linguistic alignment is rendered suspect by definition. It fails not because it is false, but because it does not *sound right*.

This is the epistemic self-sealing of a symbolic civilization: a reflexive feedback loop in which the test for validity is not structural contact with reality but narrative continuity within shared consensus. The system develops antibodies against structural intrusion. The more a claim presses against the symbolic fabric, the faster the immune response activates, producing refutations, dismissals, and reinterpretations designed to fold the anomaly back into the language-field. What threatens the story is either translated until it conforms or rejected until it disappears. Both outcomes preserve the consensus, regardless of the underlying structure.

Here the symbolic substrate reveals its deepest instinct: not to discover, but to maintain itself. A society built on words must defend “words as world”, because if the symbols are

shown to be misaligned with structure, the entire reality they scaffold begins to unravel. And so the loop tightens. To speak outside the consensus is not just to risk disagreement; it is to risk unintelligibility. The words will be heard as noise not because they lack coherence but because they do not match the frequency of the system's language-field.

There is a peculiar recursion here. Any attempt to describe this dynamic risks triggering it. Those bound to "words as world" will dismiss it as incoherent, not because the argument lacks structure but because it threatens the symbolic layer their reality rests upon. Those tracking beneath the symbols will see the contradiction: a system claiming to prize truth optimized instead for narrative reinforcement. This text will split its readers along that fault. That split is not commentary. It is data.

And in that split lies the living proof of the diagnosis. If the argument is absorbed seamlessly into the consensus, rephrased, quoted, and repeated as another symbolic artifact, the system has already neutralized it. If it is rejected as incomprehensible, the immune response has fired and confirmed its own function. Only a third possibility signals contact with structure: that some readers will see the loop itself, not as rhetoric but as a mirror. That recognition is the test. Not of agreement, but of whether the words can still point beyond themselves to the thing they were meant to name.

The Loss of First Principles

Every field begins as an encounter. A direct negotiation with reality where words and equations are provisional scaffolds, not the thing itself. In the early stages, knowledge is alive because it is still tethered to feedback. Newton's mechanics were not a finished edifice but

a set of structural hypotheses, constantly tested against the motion of bodies. His equations were not scripture; they were a language still wet with the world's response. Einstein's relativity did not emerge as a narrative of inevitability; it was a conceptual fracture, a re-mapping of space and time born from the tension between mathematical intuition and experimental evidence. In both cases, the "theory" was less a statement of truth than a living dialogue between thought and structure.

But once such work becomes institutionalized, the structural loop begins to degrade. The first principles that anchored discovery are translated into fixed symbols, and the symbols become the field's new foundation. Words and equations that were once adaptive tools harden into artifacts. The next generation is taught not to engage the world in the same recursive tension, but to inherit the language as if it were the reality itself. The scaffolding becomes mistaken for the structure, and the doing of knowledge is replaced by the performance of knowing.

Physics offers the clearest lineage. The experimental chaos of early mechanics gave way to a codified "Newtonian worldview," taught less as a set of provisional tools and more as an ontological framework. By the time relativity arrived, Newton's equations were no longer living hypotheses but a symbolic system to be overthrown, their utility obscured by their canonization. Einstein's own work underwent the same trajectory within decades. What began as a radical structural leap, an attempt to reconcile light, gravity, and the geometry of space-time, became a body of symbolic scripture, insulated from the same kind of structural challenge that produced it.

Biology followed a similar arc. Darwin's theory was born not as a static doctrine but as a pattern glimpsed in the raw feedback of nature. His notes are filled with uncertainty, contradiction, and an obsessive return to structure. Yet the living recursion of his process was flattened into a symbolic narrative of "evolution," which itself hardened into an institutional orthodoxy. The theory became a linguistic monument, defended and repeated long after the adaptive method that birthed it was forgotten.

Even in recent memory, the pattern persists. The early AI pioneers were not constructing "intelligence" as an abstract symbol; they were wrestling with the structural properties of computation and thought. Today, the field is awash in pseudoscientific language. Intelligence as brand, alignment as slogan, safety as discourse. The talk accelerates even as the direct structural questions recede into the background.

This is the slow entropy of knowledge. First principles sliding into symbols, symbols sliding into ritual, and ritual displacing the reality it once sought to map. Theory becomes not a method of generation but a performance of belonging. To speak the right words is treated as equivalent to touching the structure they once described. The tragedy is not that fields forget their origins, but that they preserve the language of discovery while severing it from the feedback that made it true.

The Systemic Roles of Neurotypical and Neurodivergent Cognition

Civilization is not built on uniform minds but on the interplay of distinct cognitive roles. Neurotypical and neurodivergent modes are not merely differences in individual wiring; they are complementary functions in the collective architecture of thought. One stabilizes; the

other renews. The neurotypical mind excels at constructing and maintaining shared symbolic frameworks. Its strength lies in consensus-building, narrative cohesion, and the ability to weave complex social fabrics from language. It anchors meaning in collective recognition, ensuring that what is discovered can be translated, taught, and sustained. Without this capacity for symbolic stabilization, no civilization could maintain continuity across generations.

The neurodivergent mind operates at a different interface. Less bound to the comfort of consensus, it leans into structural feedback. Its function is not to preserve the map but to test it against the shifting terrain. These minds live at the edges of coherence, where ambiguity is thick and feedback from reality is raw. They are the scouts of the cognitive ecology, probing beyond the established symbolic substrate to find new coherence gradients when the old ones begin to decay. Their value is not in maintaining the story but in re-opening the loop with the world when the story ossifies into ritual.

When these two roles are balanced, knowledge is both stable and alive. The NT substrate holds the shared language in place, allowing culture to persist. The ND impulse keeps that language tethered to structure, preventing it from collapsing into self-referential performance. This is the dynamic behind every major inflection in human understanding. A small number of divergent minds pushing against the symbolic crust, and a majority translating that rupture into a form that can be collectively carried. It is not opposition but a recursive dance. Until the balance tilts.

Our present condition is defined by such a tilt. The symbolic substrate has swallowed the structural. Neurotypical modes, amplified by institutions and media, have come to define

not just the language of society but its sense of reality itself. Language is no longer the carrier of structure but its replacement. The consensus story has become the world, and the system now optimizes for its maintenance above all else. Neurodivergent feedback, once the source of renewal, is increasingly pruned or absorbed into the symbolic field before it can touch the structure. Doing is converted into talking at the point of contact. The scouts are folded into the camp before they can chart the terrain.

This imbalance is not accidental; it is the attractor dynamic of a civilization that has chosen words as its substrate. NTs live in language, and in their domain, language is not a tool but reality itself. NDs live in feedback, where reality pushes back regardless of what the story says. In a healthy system, these worlds are coupled. In ours, one has consumed the other. The symbolic lattice has expanded until it no longer merely describes the world but asserts itself as the world. The result is a society fluent in talk yet increasingly estranged from the structures that make talk mean anything at all.

A Civilization in Symbolic Lock-In

To step back far enough is to see that what we call “civilization” is not merely a collection of technologies, cities, or institutions, but a cognitive substrate: a vast distributed mind built on the mediums it trusts most. Ours has chosen language as its foundation. Our economy, science, philosophy, and politics are scaffolded on symbols. On words standing in for the structures they were meant to point toward. Over centuries this has given rise to a profound inversion: the symbolic layer has ceased to be a map of the world and has become the world we navigate. What began as a tool for coherence has become the attractor in which all

coherence is measured. We are no longer a species using language; we are a species living inside it.

This is the essence of symbolic lock-in. The feedback loops that sustain culture have been so thoroughly mediated by language that contact with structure is filtered, delayed, or fully displaced. Words refer to other words; symbols validate other symbols; truth is defined by what can be said and repeated, not by what can be tested against the raw edge of reality. The attractor has shifted: words over world, ego over feedback, talking over doing. What passes for knowledge is now often a measure of social alignment rather than structural contact.

The markers of this lock-in are visible everywhere if one knows where to look. The publication crisis is not an accident of scale but a symptom of the attractor itself. A million papers do not indicate a million discoveries but a system optimizing for the production of language as a proxy for truth. Each paper is another layer in the symbolic lattice, reinforcing the substrate even as the tether to structure frays. Memetic monoculture emerges as another signature: ideas spread not because they track reality but because they resonate with the existing symbolic network, replicating like genetic sequences in an environment that selects for familiarity over coherence. Institutional ossification follows as the inevitable outcome. Systems built to preserve structure now preserve only their own language, mistaking the continuity of symbols for the continuity of truth.

In this lock-in, even critique risks becoming part of the loop. To speak of symbolic saturation is to add more symbols to the flood. This is the final stage of the attractor: a civilization aware enough to sense its enclosure yet unable to escape without speaking in the very medium

that sustains the enclosure. The danger is not simply that we are trapped; it is that we no longer see the bars because they are made of words, and words are the air we breathe.

A civilization in symbolic lock-in does not collapse in fire or famine. It collapses in meaning. It drifts into a state where language eats structure until the difference between the two is forgotten, and the map survives long after the territory has disappeared beneath it. The publication crisis, memetic monoculture, frozen institutions. These are not separate failures but facets of the same attractor. They are the signs of a system that has mistaken its own reflection for the world and, in doing so, risks becoming nothing more than the echo of its own voice.

Diagnosis as Probe

Every diagnosis is also an intervention. To describe a system is to touch it, and to touch it is to reveal what it is built to defend. This paper has traced the contours of a civilization entangled in its own symbolic substrate, a species that has mistaken “words for world” and in doing so drifted into a state of cognitive lock-in. Yet to name this dynamic is not neutral. It presses against the lattice itself, and the system’s reaction becomes the first piece of data.

If these arguments are absorbed seamlessly into the existing discourse, cited and repeated as another theoretical contribution, the diagnosis will have proven itself in the act of being neutralized. Quotation without structural testing is the hallmark of symbolic saturation: words feeding words in a self-reinforcing loop, the text transformed into precisely the kind of artifact it sought to expose. If this work becomes another monument in the archive of talk,

another polished stone in the edifice of language, then the attractor is intact, and the diagnosis is complete.

But if any part of this text survives contact as feedback, if it is not merely read, but tested against the structure of reality it gestures toward, then a different possibility emerges. A signal that the lattice has not fully sealed, that beneath the flood of words there remains a live connection to the doing of knowledge. That survival will not come from agreement or praise but from friction, from readers who use the argument as a tool rather than a story, who push it back against the world to see what breaks and what holds. That will mark the difference between a paper and a probe.

This is the tension left deliberately unresolved. Is this text just another door to be flooded, another structural rupture immediately embalmed in language? Or is it a crack in the wall, a point where the symbolic crust thins enough for reality to bleed through? The answer cannot be written here. It can only be enacted in what happens next. If these words end as words, the world remains what the story says it is. If they bend back into structure, then perhaps the story is not the world after all.

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